

Group VI: Claims 19-20, drawn to a method of making protecting film by forming a powder layer and then treating the surface.

Applicants have elected Group I, Claims 1, (3-6)/1, and 18/1 with traverse.

Applicants respectfully traverse on the additional grounds that the Office has not provided an adequate reason or example to support a conclusion of patentable distinctness, or shown that a burden exists in searching the entire application.

Further, MPEP §803 states as follows:

If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on its merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.

Applicants submit that a search of all claims would not constitute a serious burden on the Office.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants contend that the Restriction Requirement is improper and should be withdrawn.

Additionally, MPEP §821.04 states:

...if applicant elects claims directed to the product, and a product claim is subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims which depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be rejoined.

Applicants respectfully submit that should the elected group be found allowable, non-elected should be rejoined.

Applicants further submit that this application is now in condition for examination on the merits and an early notification to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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